

the United States. Such statistics clearly indicate that we cannot afford to ignore the needs of those living with a mental illness.

The impact of mental illnesses on the productivity of the United States is greatly underestimated. The Global Burden of Disease study, published by the National Institute of Mental Health, exposed that mental illness, including suicide, accounts for 15 percent of the burden of disease in established market economies. This study reveals that mental illness places a larger burden on the productivity of the United States than all cancers combined. Such findings reemphasize that more attention and resources need to be directed towards supporting the mentally ill.

Today millions of Americans living with some form of mental illness continue to be discriminated against on a daily basis by their insurance companies. Congress passed mental health parity legislation that went into effect January 1, 1998 to try and address this problem. This legislation was intended to require insurance companies that choose to provide coverage for mental health to offer the same lifetime cap as they do for physical illness. This legislation was meant to be a monumental first step in preventing discrimination against individuals with mental illness.

Since enactment of this legislation, insurance companies have not expanded their coverage, but instead have maintained just enough coverage to remain within the legal limits of the law. Today I call on my fellow Senators to support the Senator Paul Wellstone Mental Health Equitable Treatment Act of 2003, S. 486. Under this bill, full coverage equality with respect to health insurance coverage will be provided to those who are mentally ill. It is my hope that in the closing weeks before the close of the 108th Congress, that we can come together in a bipartisan manner and support S. 486, not only for those who suffer from mental illness and their families, but also to pay tribute to our colleague, the late Senator Paul Wellstone, who continuously fought for such parity during his service in the Senate.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

IN RECOGNITION OF CARL AND HESTER WHITE

• Mr. BUNNING. Mr. President, today I honor Carl and Hester White of Ludlowe, KY. On this day 60 years ago, they were married and they set out on the path of life together.

The commitment of 60 years of marriage is a truly magnificent accomplishment. This married couple has dedicated themselves to each other through thick and thin for the greater part of a century. This kind of faithfulness in marriage is no less than perseverance in the most important virtue of all, love of your fellow man.

Marriages are the bedrock of society and the foundation of responsible citi-

zenship. I congratulate Carl and Hester on their sixtieth wedding anniversary. I hope they have many more wonderful years together. May God bless them.●

YOGI BHAJAN

• Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, the death of one of New Mexico's most beloved and influential residents on Wednesday night has saddened all of us who knew him. Habbajan Sing Khalsa Yogiji was his full name, but his followers and friends worldwide knew him as Yogi BhaJan.

The spiritual teacher of hundreds of thousands of people, Yogi BhaJan was leader of the Sikhs in the Western Hemisphere. He chose New Mexico as one of several centers of business and residence in the United States, and it was at his home in Espanola that he died with family and friends near.

I have the privilege of Yogi BhaJan's friendship and support for more than 20 years. He was a dynamic, powerful person with a strong devotion to human rights, religious freedom, and good health. He was also a masterful businessman with a degree in economics who intimately understood the connection between food and health, and made health food a foundation for several hugely successful companies. "Yogi Tea," for instance, is found in households around the world.

My thoughts and prayers are with his wife Bibiji and their children, his followers and his other friends. He was a teacher of all who came to know him. We have learned much from this man, and with his death we have lost a great and good friend.●

TULSA HISPANIC COMMISSION 25TH ANNIVERSARY

• Mr. INHOFE. Mr. President, the Greater Tulsa Area Hispanic Affairs Commission was established in 1979 by law by the city of Tulsa and Tulsa County. The commission was established due to the leadership and commitment of its founding members who include Mrs. Aurora Ramirez Helton, Mr. Jack Helton, Rev. Victor Orta, Dr. Luis Reinoso, Dr. Chris Romero, Mr. Joe Rodriguez and Mr. Carlos Vargas. The commission also was established thanks to the unconditional support of the then mayor of the city of Tulsa, James M. Inhofe, his chief of staff, Richard Soudriette, and the members of the Tulsa County Commission.

This year the Greater Tulsa Hispanic Affairs Commission celebrates its 25th anniversary. On this occasion it is important to recognize the accomplishments of the commission such as it was only the second commission of its type to be established in the U.S.A. The commission has helped countless people in the Hispanic community in Tulsa to find help in the areas of health, education and economic development. Also, the commission has played a fundamental role in promoting the values and cultural rich-

ness of the Hispanic community in Tulsa. The commission has organized numerous community festivals and cultural programs and has actively promoted teaching of Spanish, as well as English. Finally, the commission aided in the establishment of the sister city program between Tulsa, OK, and San Luis Potosi, Mexico, that to this day promotes friendship and understanding between the people of the United States of America and Mexico.

Today, I, JAMES M. INHOFE, United States Senator (R-OK) on behalf of my colleagues, do hereby congratulate the members of the Greater Tulsa Hispanic Affairs Commission on the occasion of their 25th anniversary. Also, I wish the commission well in its important work to promote greater understanding and appreciation of Hispanic heritage. Furthermore, I want to recognize the work of the commission to promote the cultural diversity of our Hispanic community, which plays such a vital part of the history of the city of Tulsa, the State of Oklahoma, and the United States of America.●

IN RECOGNITION OF CAPTAIN ROBERT C. WILKENS

• Mr. HOLLINGS. Mr. President, I would like to pay tribute to naval officer, and fellow South Carolinian, Captain Robert C. Wilkens. This fall, Captain Wilkens will retire from the United States Navy after 32 years of distinguished leadership, selfless service, and tireless commitment to our Navy and Nation.

Captain Wilkens served right here in the U.S. Capitol, as the Director of Pharmacy in the Office of the Attending Physician to Congress from 1981-1985. He then entered advanced training as a pharmacy resident at the Navy's flagship hospital, National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, MD, 1986.

Wilkens continued with his career as the Pharmacy Clinical Coordinator and director of inpatient services at the Naval Hospital, Portsmouth, VA. Upon completion of that assignment in 1990, he became a Doctor of Pharmacy Candidate at the Medical College of Virginia in Richmond.

Captain Wilkens then served as the chairman of the Pharmacy Department at Naval Medical Center, San Diego, CA, from 1992-1999. By special request, he next served as the Specialty Leader and Consultant to the Navy Surgeon General for Pharmacy Policy at the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery in Washington, DC. Upon completion of that tour in 2001, Captain Wilkens returned to San Diego, and served once again as chairman of the Pharmacy Department at the Naval Medical Center.

I send best wishes on behalf of the United States Senate, for continued happiness and success to Captain Wilkens and his wife Linda as they begin the next chapter of their lives, with thanks from a grateful Nation for their loyal and dedicated service.●